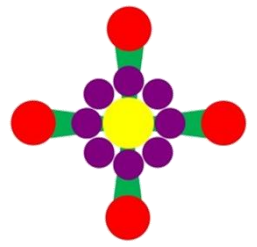


**The Benefice of  
Harden, Wilsden, Cullingworth, Denholme  
Sunday 30 March 2025  
The Fourth Sunday of Lent  
Mothering Sunday**



**Anna has created our liturgy for this Mothering Sunday**

**Preparation**

Come, worship God,  
whom Hosea likened to a mother with her children.  
God said,  
“When Israel was a child, I loved him.”

God loved the people of Israel even when they were disobedient.  
'Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk, I took them up in my arms; but they did not know that I healed them. I led them with cords of human kindness, with bands of love, I was to them like those who lift infants to their cheeks. I bent down to them and fed them.'

*(Hosea 11.1a, 3-4)*

Nurturing God,  
we worship you and thank you  
for all that you have done in our lives.

**Invitation to Confession**

Let us call to mind our sin,  
our failure to value the love of others  
and our failure to love as Christ has loved us

**Words of Confession**

Nurturing God,  
we praise you for the way in which you care for each one of us.  
Like a good parent,  
you love us whoever we are, whatever we do.

Even though we frequently disappoint you,  
you are always there, concerned for our welfare, forgiving us.  
Nurturing God, we praise and thank you.  
Forgive us for the times that we take you for granted,  
when we do things to hurt others,  
particularly members of our family and friends.  
Nurturing God, forgive us.  
Forgive us for running away, for getting so involved in the activities,  
pleasures and concerns of our lives  
that we forget that you are there.  
Nurturing God, forgive us. Bring us home again to you.  
Nurturing God, we praise you. **Amen.**

### **Assurance of Forgiveness**

May the God of love and power  
Forgive us and free us from our sins,  
heal and strengthen us by his Spirit,  
and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Collect**

God of love,  
passionate and strong,  
tender and careful:  
watch over us and hold us  
all the days of our life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **New Testament Reading**

#### ***Colossians 3.12-17***

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one

another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

**Thanks be to God for the gift of his holy word.**

### **Gospel Reading**

*Luke 2.33-35*

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

**Praise be to God for the gift of his Holy Word.**

### **Affirmation of Faith**

**We believe in God the Father,  
from whom every family  
in heaven and on earth is named.  
We believe in God the Son,  
who lives in our hearts through faith,  
and fills us with his love.  
We believe in God the Holy Spirit,  
who strengthens us  
with power from on high.  
We believe in one God;  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

### **Reflection with Richard**

Some people spend a great deal of time choosing what they are going to wear when they get dressed in the morning. Clothes can sometimes say a quite a lot about us.

A uniform, gives people information about what a person does, like a police officer or a soldier; some clothes are important because of the protection they give, like overalls or safety boots; some clothes say how aware we are of current trends, like a particular brand and edition of trainer for example.

In Victorian times it was not unusual for people from the higher classes of society to wear five sets of clothes in a day at the same time as people from the lower classes of society were wearing the same clothes day after day.

Clothes differ from country to country, reflecting culture, climate and tradition. Some countries even have a national dress.

I wonder what made you chose to wear what you are wearing at this moment?

In his letter to the Colossians, St Paul tells the people in the church there that they must put on very particular garments. But these are not clothes of material:

“clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.”

Paul instructs those he writes to that they should put on particular characteristics. These too are clothes which give information and which bring protection. They give a particular message about a culture and a unity, about the values which Christians live by.

For many young children it is their parents who choose the clothes they wear when they are young.

In the same way adults can model the values which children pick up from their behaviour.

As we give thanks today for Mothers and for parents on this Mothering Sunday, let us be aware of the responsibility we have to those who take notice of the

clothes we wear, not the material clothes, but the garments which Paul talks about.

Is our love jumper a little threadbare, or is there a hole in our kindness coat? Does our patience waistcoat look like new and really catch the eye?

Give thanks today for the clothes we wear and for those who design and make them. Perhaps even take a moment to be more aware of who does make our clothes and where they come from.

And let us be especially mindful too of our “action clothes” and pray that we will keep them well maintained so that others will be inspired and blessed by our spiritual sartorial splendour!

### **Prayers of Intercession with Helen**

God of love,

We thank you for a mother’s love. We pray for families throughout the world today as they spend time together and celebrate. We remember mothers who are apart from their children and for all those whose mothers have died; for all who long for children but are unable to have them;  
For all the joys and struggles of family life;

Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our Prayer**

God of Peace,

We thank you that we live in a place of relative safety. We pray for the places in our world torn apart by conflict, for the persecuted and the oppressed and for the hungry and the homeless.  
For all who need safety and shelter;

Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our Prayer**

God of kindness,

We thank you for simple pleasures in the midst of challenge and hardship; for lengthening hours of daylight and signs of spring.

For people who lift our burdens and for your faithful presence with us through everything.

As your chosen people;

Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our Prayer**

God of love,

We thank you that you forgive us, and we pray for the courage to forgive one another. We ask that you soften our hearts with generosity and humility to serve others.

That our churches will be places of acceptance and giving;

Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our Prayer**

God of peace,

We pray for our world leaders and all who carry memories of conflict and for all whose lives have been broken.

For those in our own community who are suffering, for all who are bereaved or wait with the ill and the dying, we ask for your peace.

Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our Prayer**

God of kindness,

We pray for the needs in our own communities; for families under pressure, struggling with rising bills and debt.

We think of our children amid the pressures of today's world and for the sacrifices of parenthood. For all who need to know today they are loved, let them see you in all they do.

**Merciful Father,**

**Accept these prayers for the sake of your Son,  
our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

## The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and for ever. Amen.**

## The Peace

Through the prophet Isaiah,  
God says,  
'As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you.'  
The peace of the Lord be always with us

## Words of Praise

We call to mind that the love  
of God is like a light in our darkness.  
**Blessed be God for ever.**

We praise you, our God, for all mothers who  
have loved and laughed and laboured as they  
cared for their children.  
**Blessed be God for ever.**

We praise you, our God, for all mothers who  
have wept in sorrow and joy for their children.  
**Blessed be God for ever.**

We praise you, our God, for Jesus, born of a woman and nurtured in her love, and for Mary, a reminder of your patient, waiting love.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

### Final Prayer

Loving God, we give thanks for all who care for us, who have encouraged us and helped us grow, who have forgiven us, and cared for us when we were unwell, who have supported us when times were hard, who have challenged us, who have told us about you. Nurturing God, we give you thanks. Amen. I saw water flowing from the threshold of the temple. **Amen.**

### Conclusion

May the blessing of God be with us as we love and serve one another; and as we share Christ's unconditional love – in the name of God the Creator, Redeemer and Spirit. **Amen.**

Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord:  
**In the name of Christ. Amen.**

